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estate on which they lived. Though a *gleba adscriptus*, he could acquire and hold property of his own. Crown lands as a rule descended from father to son. At times town dwellers, retired merchants, etc., settled in the country and became cultivators of the soil or vigniards. The "levy," ilku, tithe and other requisitions, exacted at times, were contributed by the owner of the estate, although the peasants discharged the obligation.⁷

Pp. 28-72 contain transcription, translation, and commentary of the separate texts; followed by lists of place names; gods, named, or occurring in compound names; and personal names (pp. 72-76); and a glossary (pp. 76-79).⁸

This short summary, inadequate though it is, will show the great importance of this contribution toward our knowledge of the history, geography, and culture of Harran, written by one who, more than any other Assyriologist, speaks on this subject as one with authority.⁹

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STEVENSON'S ASSYRIAN AND BABYLONIAN CONTRACTS.¹⁰

In this excellent and careful little volume, which was presented as a Doctor's Dissertation to the University of Chicago, Dr. Stevenson collects together such contract texts as bear Aramaic inscriptions in the British Museum. In the infancy of cuneiform research much was hoped for from such inscriptions. As bilingual tablets they would perhaps furnish a welcome check or confirmation to the readings proposed for the wedge-formed characters. But it soon became evident that such a hope was

⁷ "Many estates were exempt from some or all of these obligations, by charter, probably, and others owed their dues to temples. The contracts for the sales of estates frequently show a clause specifying that the estate is free from such charges. As we can hardly suppose such a general freedom obtained by letters patent, it probably was possible to compound with the government by some recognized payment. Such a composition would not be made in the case of crown lands and we expect them to be subject to all the charges exacted from the peasantry. This may be the explanation of the mysterious 'marks' (discussed at length on pp. 79-81) attached to certain of the members of the families in our documents."

⁸ The Glossary mentions some very interesting words and forms, e. g., ad-ru, an enclosed yard, barn, or the like; ba-tu-su, epithet of a "daughter," perhaps "child" (see also *ibid.*, p. 80, and *Assyrian Deeds and Documents*, Vol. III, 519-21); (i)gu u-lu-pu; za-am-ri, a plant; on amēl rāb MU = "chief baker," see now, on the other hand, Delitzsch in *BAS.*, Vol. IV, p. 484; the reading nišbu for the sign MAN-ḫu is quite certain from the passages where *nis* is spelled *ni-is*, see Muss-Arnolt, *Dictionary*, pp. 700, 701; gar-bu-tu; qab-lu, some sort of garden, or enclosure; qa-tin, an official, overseer, store-keeper; the bit ri-pi-tu, No. 15, 1, contains perhaps the same word as akal ri-pi-tu, Zimmern, *Ritualtafel*, Nos. 66, 08; 67, 07, explained by Zimmern as a "Getreide-art;" cf. רִיפּוֹת, 1 ri-bit, in No. 7, left-hand edge, II 3, belongs also perhaps here; bit ri-pi-tu would be a granary; rāḫu, "idle, unemployed," pl. rāḫāti, occurs also in Neb. 62, 6, etc.; (i)gu ša-šu-gi, a cultivated plant. Is u-se-lu-ni really a *Pi'el* of šelû, "to offer, dedicate"?

⁹ P. 12, l. 4, read: Distinguish Assyrian from Babylonian names; l. 21 (end), read *certainly* for "certainly;" p. 13, l. 18 (+ 21), נֶשֶׁד for נֶשֶׁד, p. 16, l. 6 from below, Šer for Šer; p. 78, col. 2, nadbaru, MAT-BAR "steppe," waste land, 8, I, 12, where (on p. 62) the form is correctly read madbar (*c. st.* of madbaru).

¹⁰ ASSYRIAN AND BABYLONIAN CONTRACTS with Aramaic reference notes. By J. H. Stevenson, Ph.D., Professor in Vanderbilt University. The Vanderbilt Oriental Series. American Book Company.

quite illusory. Indeed, we now turn rather to the cuneiform in order to discover what these Aramaic inscriptions mean. It is, therefore, no small gain to have the cuneiform texts as well. Dr. Stevenson further transliterates and translates the cuneiform, so that any one can follow their bearing on the sense to be conjectured for the Aramaic.

The book deserves great praise for the kindly way in which the previous attempts to deal with these inscriptions are described and corrected. Many of the tablets are hard to read in the cuneiform but as a rule the Aramaic is far harder. The signs are scratched in, often very slightly. But whatever can be made out is really valuable, because it is so accurately dated. A student of Semitic palæography has here the most perfect guide he can get to the changes which the Aramaic writing underwent from the seventh to the fifth centuries B. C.; at any rate, in Assyria and Babylonia.

With the exception of one or two texts written wholly in Aramaic the inscriptions rarely add any information to what the cuneiform contained. They were in no way essential parts of the documents. They seem to have played the same part as a penciled note on an engrossed deed. Hence they are well described as "reference notes." This need not be pressed to mean that they were for the convenience of a curator, who might be called upon to find them in a hurry. For sometimes the Aramaic, as in No. 2, gives practically all the information of the cuneiform. In other cases, as in No. 1, a whole deed of sale of twenty-four lines is docketed with simply the name of the seller.

It is probable that in the present state of the originals no more accurate copies can be made than Dr. Stevenson has given. Advances may be made when the meaning of some obscure words, or traces of words, are illustrated by parallels elsewhere, or by better understanding of the cuneiform. Any day a tablet may turn up, which by a variant, or a fresh context, may fix the sense of the many ideographic or otherwise uncertain words in the cuneiform. What is certain is set down clearly and with due references to the source of our knowledge.

A few suggestions may here be made for the purpose of eliciting further research. On p. 116 the rendering of שַׁעֲרָא by "interest" is preferred to Rawlinson's "rice." But ŠE-PAT seems to be always used of corn for food, and ŠE-BAR as corn more generally. It is therefore still possible that the Aramaic means "barley," as the usual food of the working classes. There seems no ground for the rendering "interest," or "taxation" in the circumstances of an advance of grain to a farmer at harvest time.

The phrase referred to on p. 20, *ṣibtu bennu ana mē ūmē sartu ana kâl šanâte*, means probably that as *ṣibtu*, "seizure," and *bennu* some "fever" or disease was a thing likely to render the purchased slave valueless, a hundred days were allowed within which the purchaser might repudiate his bargain. The seller suspecting that his slave was sickening might have tried to sell him, but the purchaser inserted this clause to protect himself from having a sick slave on his hands. The

hundred days seems a long time for an illness to incubate. But in the early Babylonian contracts the time allowed for the bennu was "one month." There it is associated with *tepitum*, which is allowed one to three days. This was in the case of female slaves, who were thus sold on trial. The buyer could not send back the slave after three days on the ground that she had any organic deficiency. The *sartu* here is any "blemish" such as justified the return of a slave. That could be pleaded any time. So the code of Hammurabi enacted that a slave could be sent back on proof of a *bagru*, or cause of complaint. The clause is a guarantee on the part of the seller that the slave has no undisclosed defect. It is a stock phrase and condensed by omission of the apodosis. So, often, we read *ša pi duppi šuati unakkaru*, "who shall pervert the tenor of this document," but the fate in store is not set down. In the phrase quoted from III R. 49, No. 3, 32, the sentence reads in full, *ša sinništi, ištu pāni sarte, kātā šibti, ḥabulli, Karmeuni šū amēlu urkiu*, "for the woman, against any defect, seizure of the hands (or) injury, Karmeuni he is guarantee." The "seizure of the hands," like *šibit pi*, "seizure of the mouth," means a seizure which renders them useless.

The notes on the text are always helpful and suggestive though finality is out of the question yet on account of the lacunæ and for want of parallels. Here and there a small typographical error occurs and there are one or two oversights. On p. 138, אִילַת is for *amiltu* rather than *amelutu*. In No. 35, line 1, for *ina māti išu* read *ina sat-tuk*. The *asnê* seem to be a sort of date fruit, brought from Dilmun (ZA., XII, p. 408 f.). On p. 130, the *belit* tree is better read *tillit* and seems to be a variant of *tillatu*, a grape vine.

The translations are well done with the present state of knowledge; the cuneiform texts seem to be the most reliable yet produced, and there is a very useful register of proper names. Altogether it is a most useful and careful piece of work.

C. H. W. JOHNS.

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FOSSEY'S LA MAGIE ASSYRIENNE.¹

Since the days of Lenormant's work (*Études Accadiennes*, 1873-1880; *Die Magie und Wahrsagekunst der Chaldäer*; improved and enlarged German edition, Jena, 1878) no attempt has been made to produce an exhaustive treatise on Babylonian Magic, although many texts dealing with this subject have been published. The present carefully edited book cannot fail, therefore, to be a welcome contribution to our knowledge of this important and interesting branch of Assyriology. Dr. Fossey,² who has dedicated his work to the veteran Jules Oppert,

¹ LA MAGIE ASSYRIENNE. Étude suivie de Textes Magiques transcrits, traduits et commentés par C. Fossey, Docteur-ès-Lettres (Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études; Sciences Religieuses. Quinzième Volume). Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1902. Pp. 1-474.